

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A ball joint comprising:
 - a ball stud having a spherical head portion and a shaft portion; and
 - a socket ~~coupled with~~ receiving the spherical head portion therein; and
 - a ball seat having a hollow spherical resin element, a first annular resin element, and a second annular resin element, and a plurality of slits formed through the spherical resin element and the first annular resin element;
 - the spherical resin element being disposed between the socket and the head portion and having a top end with an opening receiving the ball stud therethrough and a bottom end supporting a bottom of the head portion, the spherical resin element allowing the ball stud to turn in relation to the socket about the spherical center of the head portion;
 - the first annular resin element being disposed in the top end of the spherical resin element between the spherical resin element and the spherical head portion;
 - the second annular resin element being disposed in the bottom end of the spherical resin element between the spherical resin element and the socket;
 - the first and second annular resin elements having a higher coefficient of friction than the spherical resin element such that rotation of the ball stud causes the spherical resin element to deform in a rotational direction about the center of the head portion before the spherical head portion starts sliding in the rotation direction in relation to the deformation portion of the ball seat. ~~of the ball stud via a ball seat configured to turn the ball stud in relation to the socket about the spherical center of the spherical head portion, the ball seat~~
- including:

~~_____ a deformation portion of the ball seat configured to elastically deform the ball seat in a rotational direction about the center axis of the shaft portion; and _____ frictional engagement surfaces located on the inner and outer circumference of the ball seat configured to elastically deform the deformation portion of the ball seat in the rotational direction before the spherical head portion starts sliding in the rotational direction in relation to the deformation portion of the ball seat.~~

2. (Currently Amended) A ball joint according to claim 1, wherein:

a coefficient of friction between at least part of the surface of the inner circumference of the deformation portion of the ball seat and the surface of the ball stud is larger than the coefficient of friction between the outer circumference of the deformation portion and the socket, and

a coefficient of friction between at least part of the surface of the outer circumference ~~of not the deformation portion~~ of the ball seat and the surface of the socket is larger than the coefficient of friction between the inner circumference ~~of not the deformation portion~~ of the ball seat and the ball stud.

3. (Previously Presented) A ball joint according to claim 1, wherein the deformation portion of the ball seat comprises a plurality of slits formed in the ball seat.

4. (Previously Presented) A ball joint according to claim 2, wherein the deformation portion of the ball seat comprises a plurality of slits formed in the ball seat.